

REMARKS

In a Final Office Action mailed on September 25, 2006, claims 1-5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Caney.

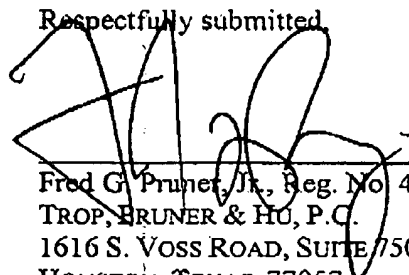
Caney fails to anticipate independent claim 1 for at least the reason that Caney fails to disclose a body that includes a first opening to receive a first tubing section; a second opening to receive a second tubing section; and a passageway.

More specifically, Caney discloses joining concrete-encased pipe sections together. In this regard, when the pipe sections 6 and 7 (see Fig. 1 of Caney) are connected together, a cement lining 8, 9 covers the pipe sections. It is unclear from the Office Action which elements are the alleged first opening, second opening and passageway of claim 1 and which element is considered to be the body of claim 1, as the Office Action does not have any specific citations to Caney. Therefore, Applicant requests clarification of the rejections from the Examiner. Caney does not disclose the body, however, as when the pipe sections 6 and 7 are connected together, there is no passageway located in the alleged body, regardless of which portion of the fitting depicted in Fig. 1 is considered to be the body. Thus, for at least this reason, Caney fails to anticipate independent claim 1. Claims 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18 and 22 are patentable for at least the reason that these claims depend from an allowable claim.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, withdrawal of the § 102 rejections and a favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance are requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 20-1504 (SHL.0238US).

Respectfully submitted,



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